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Sukru Emre M.D. FACS

Chief, Yale New Haven Transplantation Center

March 7, 2012

In Support of House Bill No. 5333

Public Health Committee

Testimony in support of HB 5333,

An Act Concerning Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness

Representative Ritter, Senator Gerratana, and members of the Public Health Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to submit this written testimony in support of House Bill # 5333.

My name is Sukru Emre M.D. and I writing in support of House Bill # 5333. This legislation will increase opportunities to educate the residents of Connecticut of the importance of organ and tissue donation. I am currently the Chief of Yale New Haven Transplantation Center (YNHTC) and Medical Director of the New England Organ Bank.

We currently have approx 1,000 patients awaiting lifesaving, heart, kidney and liver transplants at Yale New Haven Hospital. Unfortunately many of these patients will die before transplantation due to the lack of available organs in the State of Connecticut.

Since the beginning of 2012 we have removed approx 15 patients from the UNOS transplant waiting list as their medical condition deteriorated significantly while waiting for organ transplantation. I have worked in organ transplantation for 25 years and am passionate about raising awareness throughout the state and local community. As Chief of YNHTC, I believe that it is my responsibility to participate in education and community awareness campaigns. Since joining YNHTC in 2007, in collaboration with Yale New Haven Hospital and Yale University I have held two 'Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness' health fairs of New Haven Green and invited Donate Life CT to participate along with other transplant related organizations. I also worked with New England Organ Bank, American Liver Foundation, National Kidney Foundation to increase organ donation and transplant awareness.

I support this legislation as it creates an opportunity for Connecticut to increase the number of donors statewide. More lives are saved when more people say 'yes' to donation. Presently, Connecticut has 40% of adults committed to organ and tissue donation. This is below the national average of 42%. With 19 Americans dying daily simply because an organ was not available, the situation is dire. More



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education, information, exposure and outreach is needed to raise Connecticut beyond average. Creating a collaborative team that can explore successes other states have experienced, will allow us to model our efforts after such leading donation states.

Thank you for introducing this life-saving legislation. I know it will have a positive impact on the lives of more than 1,200 Connecticut residents waiting for the 'gift of life'.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sukru Emre', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sukru Emre MD, FACS
Chief, Section of Transplantation and Immunology
Director, Yale-new Haven Transplantation Center
Department of Surgery
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